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ΑΙΤΝΑΙΟΙ ΚΑΝΘΑΡΟΙ

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almost certain, and Martin placed l. 9 after l. 11. To this change, however, there are serious objections which are remarked by the editors, notably the asyndeton of the clause *ἔργματα*, and the connection of *δῶματα* with *ἀνθρώπων*. It seems preferable to put l. 9 after l. 10, with a full stop at the end of l. 10, changing *Ἔστιν* to *εἰδότες* in l. 11. *Ἔστιν* may have been substituted because *εἰδότες* occurred in the same position in l. 12.

There is no palæographic explanation of the apparent inversion of ll. 9-10

(unless l. 10 was first omitted, then added in the margin of a MS., and, finally, wrongly placed by a copyist too mechanical to think of the sense of what he was writing); yet even so pure accidents do happen, even in copying MSS.

If this arrangement is right, Groddeck's view that the occasion of the hymn was the dedication of a joint temple of Hermes and Hestia seems more definitely established.

HUGH G. EVELYN WHITE.

ΑΙΤΝΑΙΟΙ ΚΑΝΘΑΠΟΙ.

EVERYONE remembers the Aetnaean beetle on which Trygaeus mounted to Olympus, but it is not so generally realized that it is also a source of mystification. The Alexandrians had carefully collected parallels from Epicharmus, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Plato Comicus in order to explain the allusion; and though we ought to congratulate ourselves on the good fortune of their preservation, we may suspect that they have actually confused the issue. Let us see what the interpreters have to say, starting from the scholia. There are three alternatives: (1) A big beetle, because Aetna was a big mountain. This is almost a literal paraphrase of Plato's joke (fr. 37, I. 610 K.): *ὡς μέγα μέντοι πάνν τήν Αἴτνην ὄρος εἶναι φασὶ τεκμαίρου | ἔνθα τρέφεσθαι τὰς κανθαρίδας τῶν ἀνθρώπων λόγος ἐστὶν | οὐδὲν ἐλάττους* ('Judge how big Aetna must be, where they tell us the beetles are as big as men'). 'Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat!' And yet it is adopted by Blaydes in sober earnest. (2) Aetnaean, because a peculiar kind of (large) beetle is found there. The fact is established by the evidence of natives (Epicharmus), or of one who was as good as a native (Aeschylus). Sophocles and Plato show that they were big. We will leave this for the moment and pass to (3): Aetnaean, because Aetnaean (Sicilian) horses were a famous breed. For the last-mentioned fact, which is

notorious, the scholiast quotes Pind. fr. 102. Now this is a learned note, worthy of all respect, although after successive redactions, it perhaps bears a different aspect than when first composed by Didymus. But I imagine that, if the situation in the *Pax* were considered without any of the prejudice imported from the scholia, no one would hesitate to plump for the third view. 'My master has put in the stable an Arabian-beetle.'¹ Yet Van Leeuwen and Mr. Graves are alone in taking this course at all hazards. Dr. Rogers is very decisively on the other side: 'The passages which they [the scholl.] cite . . . are conclusive in favour of the third [our second] interpretation' [*i.e.* 'that there was in fact some species of large beetle called the Aetnaean, probably from being found in the neighbourhood of that mountain']. Dr. Merry and Mr. Sharpley are inclined to hedge, apparently agreeing with the view expressed by Jebb on *O.C.* 312: 'In *Ar. Pax* 73 the *Αἰτναῖος μέγιστος κανθαρος* is not a mere joke on the Etna breed of horses, but alludes to a species of beetle actually found there.' These critics have not observed that zoological accuracy would have blunted the none too keen edge of the witticism. It was reserved for O. Crusius, in one of his masterly notes on the *Paroemio-*

¹ So Mr. Sharpley. But the joke is impossible in English, as will appear.

graphi (*Philol.* suppl. vi. 291f.), to show that Aristophanes did not invent the joke, but inherited it from Epicharmus (fr. 76 K.): <ὁ> Πυγμαρίων λοχαγὸς ἐκ τῶν κανθάρων | τῶν μεζόνων, οὓς φαντι τὰν Αἰτναίαν ἔχειν. The occasion described was the attack of the Pygmies on the sleeping Heracles (Philostr. *imag.* 2. 22), —a scene which exactly corresponds with Gulliver's earliest adventure in Lilliput; and the leader of the Pygmies had just leapt from his war-chariot drawn by the big beetles that Aetna was said to rear. But I am surprised that Crusius did not draw the inference that the Αἰτναῖος κανθάρος is altogether a fabulous beast, the figment of Epicharmus' (or some other's) brain. For the starting point of the combination is simply the verbal similarity of κανθῶν (κανθήλιος) to κανθάρος, an instance of γέλως ἀπὸ τῆς λέξεως κατὰ παρωνυμίαν (Kaibel, *Com.* I. p. 51, Starkie's *Acharnians*, p. xlix, Rutherford, *Annotation*, p. 442). The point is driven home in Aristophanes by the grooming of the beetle, which is addressed as κανθῶν—a quasi-hypocoristic—by its master. Cf. Greg. *Cypr. Cod. Mosq.* 2. 24 Αἰτναῖον κανθῶνα· τὸν μέγαν. Henceforward, Αἰτναῖος κανθάρος becomes part of the comedian's stock-in-trade, a ludicrous image apt to describe any fantastic, grotesque, and unfamiliar object. Aeschylus, in his satyric Σίλουφος πετροκυλιστής (fr. 233), was perhaps the first to give currency at Athens to the Sicilian extravagance. Sisyphus, straining at his penal task, every limb extended against the weight of the rock, what is he but a huge Aetnaean beetle crawling up the mountain?¹ Sophocles, in his satyric *Daedalus* (fr. 165), where metre suggests that we should read ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ κανθάρος | τῶν Αἰτναίων <γέ> πάντως, presents a more enigmatic picture. But I believe that he was referring to the brazen giant Talos (λέγει δὲ πάντως εἰκάζων εἰς μέγαν, says the scholiast),

that masterpiece of Hephaestus' cunning, constructed with a single tube of life running from neck to ankle, whom Minos employed as a sentinel to exclude strangers from Crete. 'Well, he certainly isn't a beetle, not even an Aetnaean one. . . .' It is surely significant that all the four passages quoted to illustrate the *Pax* are also of a comic character; significant again, if every traveller knew of these beetles, that Plato should think it worth while to say that they were reported to be bigger than men; significant above all that the Sicilian Epicharmus should attribute their existence to hearsay.

Quite recently Oxyrhynchus has yielded another example, again from a satyric drama (Soph. *Ichneut.* 300), which, as I venture to think, entirely confirms our results. After several futile attempts by the satyrs to guess Cyllene's riddle concerning the beast which found a voice after death, they suggest the κεράστης κανθάρος Αἰτναῖος. 'Now you're almost exactly right,' replies Cyllene. Guessing can go no further; they have certainly succeeded in naming no less amazing a τέρας. The dialogue moves towards a climax of inept perplexity. The satyrs ask in one breath: 'Is he like a weasel or a leopard?' Then: 'Is he like a dog² or a crab?' No wonder that, when they come to the horned Aetnaean beetle, Cyllene gravely assures them they are right. As to κεράστης, I suppose it to be simply an added extravagance. A beast which spoke after death might be as dangerous to encounter as the κεράστης ὄφις of the Libyan desert.

Whether the scarabaeus, which appears on a coin of Aetna beneath a head of Silenus (B.V. Head, *Hist. Num.*² p. 131), has so much significance as has been claimed for it, is a question for numismatists to decide. But they should not be hampered by a false impression of the literary evidence.

A. C. PEARSON.

¹ I follow Hermann in making fr. 227 interrogative: ἀλλ' ἀρουραῖος τίς ἐστι σμίνθος ὧδ' ὑπερφύης; Here is the answer: <πῶς λέγεις;> Αἰτναῖός ἐστι κανθάρος βία πονῶν.

² ἰχνευτή (298), conjectured by Zielinski, is now acknowledged by Professor Hunt to be the reading of the papyrus.